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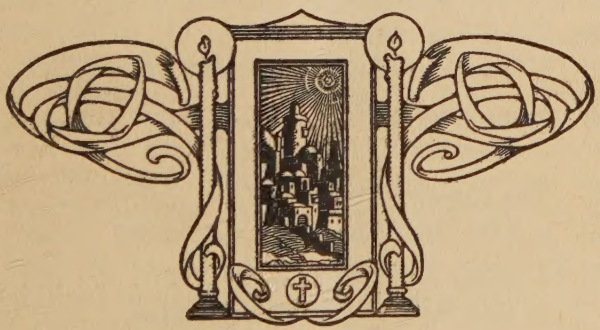
The MINISTER'S QUARTERLY

Continuing The Seminar Quarterly

VOLUME IX : No. 1 FEBRUARY, 1953

Issued in the Interest of Christian Worship and Preaching



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Published quarterly by
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE MINISTRY
THE CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN CHURCHES
287 Fourth Avenue New York 10, N. Y.

V. 9
1953

PIES 15 CENTS. ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION 50 CENTS per year

Entered as second-class matter March 2, 1945, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under Act of March 3, 1879

53540

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All communications relating to subscriptions should be addressed to the office of The General Council, Room 915, 287 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.

All contributions (typewritten where possible) should be addressed to the Editor: Dr. G. G. Atkins, with stamped envelope for return in case of non-acceptance. Till further notice address all communications to Editor, c/o Council office.

A Minister Looks at His Job

An Address before the Southern Convention of Congregational Christian Churches

President Russell Henry Stafford

The Hartford Seminary Foundation, Hartford, Conn.

I AM going to talk to you about the ministry. It is the greatest job on earth. Let me tell you why I think so.

I ought to know. I was at it long enough. Thirty-five years, boy and man, from the time I was twenty until I changed over to school management in the same field at fifty-five. I changed then only because I felt that I had learned some things through the years which it was time for me to share with tomorrow's ministers; while I was sure also that a younger man, carrying on from where I left off, could get farther faster, in developing the new program which we had started to build in an old parish, than I could do, fagged as I was from laying foundations, and with only ten or fifteen years to go before retirement.

I lost money, and for a while I lost friends, by making that change. But so far everything has worked out as I hoped, and even better. It is hard to imagine how I could be happier anywhere than I am in what I am doing now. Yet even so there are times when I get hankering to plunge back into the pastorate on my own, instead of standing on the edge, encouraging others to dive and cheering on those who are already in the swim.

For the ministry is so fascinating that it gets into your blood. And again I say, I ought to know. My first parish was in the country, seven miles from the nearest town, in central California. My last parish was downtown in a big city area, with my people scattered through some forty clustered municipalities. In between I had worked in two factory towns, a summer resort, two unprosperous suburbs, a college community, two big metropolitan churches—assistant in one, chief in the other. Geographically these included the states of California, New York, Minnesota, Missouri, Massachusetts; and an army pastorate—a chaplaincy—in Arkansas, through a blistering summer, thrown in. I don't want to boast, but I think I know the lie of the land and most ranges of the ministry pretty well.

Don't get the idea that it has all been smooth sailing, either. Maybe it looked that way, from the outside; a minister has to understand the art of putting up a good front, like an actor or a politician. And on the whole I got the breaks, as they say. But, believe me, I have also taken the bumps. And why not? Who wants a downy couch? It is more fun to ride a bucking bronco than an elderly cart horse, if you can stick on, or climb back on after you are thrown.

You will see from what I have said that when I speak of the ministry I mean the parish ministry, the pastorate. Not only is that where I have had experience, but also that is the backbone of the church.

I

Up at Hartford in our Foundation—a peculiar word for such an institution, but probably a better one, because less pretentious for a community of small specialized graduate schools, than university, which would be technically more accurate—we have four schools for four different Church-centered vocations: the pastorate, religious education, missions, and social service. These schools are all of equal rank in the Foundation. These

vocations are all essential to the total function of the Christian Church, of which most of the branches are represented among the students on our nonsectarian campus. But of the four schools the Theological Seminary is the oldest, and founded the rest; that is why we call the whole collection The Hartford Seminary Foundation.

That is a parable. Of course we must have social workers, missionaries, and directors of religious education nowadays; and for each category there are special subjects and skills to be mastered, of which the others know next to nothing. But without pastors none of these other Christian leaders could carry on. For the pastors keep the Churches going, and the Churches keep these other lines of activity going. So I believe I am without prejudice when I insist, even though it happens to be the area where my own service has been rendered, that the pastorate comes first in every sense. It is of initial, continuing and supreme importance to the Christian Movement in every locality and as a whole.

Mainly the parish minister does three things. He is charged with the proclamation of the Word of God, the care of souls, and the administration of his parish. Each of these functions in turn can be broken down into two or more elements closely connected. Any of these functions thoroughly performed might well be a full-time position. They are all intensely interesting; I can't decide which strikes me as the most so. Link them together, as they have to be linked if the parish minister is going to measure up to his responsibilities, and you have a combination that in my opinion can't be beat by any occupation on earth for exhilaration and delight, provided that you believe with all your heart in the Lord Jesus Christ and would rather be his slave than any man's master: that you like to work; and that you have a lively imagination, so that you will make the most of your opportunities. Let's look at these functions a little more closely, and in reverse order.

II

First, then, parish administratio
Every church has a business side.
holds and maintains property, it pays s
aries, it makes investments in outside a
tivities (missions and the like). It h
to have meetings of stockholders (all
members) and of directors (deacon
trustees, church councils) at stated i
tervals for the transaction of business.
must keep up regular relations on goo
terms with the other churches of all d
nominations in its neighborhood, a
with the churches of its own denomin
tion throughout the area and beyon
Here are finance, politics and diplomac
all in one basket. And the general ma
ager is the pastor. It is he who will
held to account, whether or not he
directly at fault, if anything goes wron
So he must keep his feet on the groun
deal with people tactfully, and handle a
fairs systematically and with efficiency

Secondly, the care of souls; an o
fashioned expression for looking out f
people one by one when they need hi
first winning their confidence, so th
they will turn to him for advice and he
when they are anxious or get into tro
ble. And the only way to win their co
fidence as every pastor knows is by goi
in and out among them unceasingl
making many hundreds of short friend
calls in their homes every year, with co
plete coverage, playing no favorites. T
minister must be everybody's friend, a
can't afford to be any body's pet. Wh
they do start coming to him, moreov
because they trust him, he must never
shocked by anything, no matter ho
shocking; yet he must never let down h
own standards one inch. And besid
confessing some, he will christen a
marry and bury them all, sometim
throughout a whole countryside. Th
spells hard work. But what this is ma
up of is human relations. And it is fro
human relations that we learn the mo
and get the biggest thrills in life, th
side of heaven.

Thirdly, proclamation of the Word

God. Preaching, we call it; sermons, we call these pronouncements. I wish we could discard both terms; they are terribly hackneyed. Of course we can't. But at least we can take pains to see clearly what they mean.

We are to make God, his love, his will, and the principles of human conduct grounded in his nature and our relation to him, known to men and women and children in terms of where they live, how they think and speak, what they have to do, and the world of which they are a part, with worldwide outreach and influence and therefore with worldwide obligation, whether as yet they realize it or not. That, reverently speaking, is some job.

We need to know God for ourselves, of course, to begin with. And we need to be saturated in the Bible, through which he speaks to us; especially in the Gospels, where we can win actual first-hand acquaintance with his son our Saviour if we will.

III

But we dare not stop there. We must also know the people to whom we have to make God known in such a way that they shall feel him, not merely think the correct things about him. We cannot reach them where they live unless we know them. We must know them in their real concerns and difficulties and strengths and weaknesses, not just in their Sunday-go-to-meeting clothes.

We must also know the whole world, backwards and forwards, up and down, as well as we can. For these people of ours are a part of it. By it they are conditioned; by them in some degree it is conditioned in turn. Hence, though our talks to them will be simple and intimate, yet they must come out of a background of wide and varied study. They must carry overtones of reality without any whine of sanctimonious singsong.

Hence the intellectual as well as the spiritual stimulus of the ministry to its executant is simply inexhaustible. Reading over broad fields, meditation, writing, and a contagious spontaneity of public utterance after all this private preparation —these together will keep the wheels of the mind spinning, and the brain will never get rusty.

When a man takes on these three functions simultaneously, he is going to be busy from then on, beyond any familiar measure of other men's business. Not for the pastor any thrity-five hour week, or forty hours, or forty-eight hours either. A competent and conscientious pastor builds his weekly time-budget around two fixed items: at least four hours daily for five mornings in study and sermon preparation, protected from interruption; at least three hours daily for four afternoons in systematic parish calling, rain or shine, well or ailing, subject to interruption only by funerals or tornadoes. To these two blocs of time he attaches other blocs on every side for other duties that must not be neglected, until before he knows it the hour total runs to around seventy or beyond. He will have no time to stay at home and help with the housework or baby-sit. He will hardly have time to sleep and eat.

He will get tired as a dog; more tired than any dog I ever met. But he will never be bored. This is the most exciting occupation any man ever tackled. It is no place for a lazy man. But there is no place for a lazy man in the Kingdom of Heaven, either. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work," said Jesus. Who but a moron wants to loaf, anyway, when there is something interesting to be done? The harder we work at what we like to do, the more alive we are.

IV

But what is the use of all this hard work? Is the Church really important enough for such investment of energy? In answer I might speak of all the people one by one whom we pastors rescue from doubt, discouragement, despair, downfall into courageousness and constructive living in the joy of faith and hope and love. These are the first hand results

which every devoted minister finds accruing from his toils, to his own astonishment, so far do they exceed through the years what he had dared to expect from such low-grade service as he can render. But instead let me ungratefully take all that for granted, and speak instead in the widest terms, with a world reference. It is in the main the Protestant Churches of America which set the standard of conscience and motive for the middle class all over the country, even to a great extent for middle class people who do not themselves go to Church. And America is a middle class country. That is what democracy means: grading down the top-lofty and building up the downtrodden to a sound middle position where everybody works, everybody thinks, and everybody has enough to live on. We have not got there yet, but we are moving in that direction.

But America cannot live by herself any longer. She has emerged suddenly and dizzily into preeminence among the nations of mankind. As goes America, so goes the world!

As goes the middle class, so goes America. As goes the church, so goes the middle class. As go the pastors, so go the churches. Now do you see why for depth of influence I would rather be a preacher than be President?

What kind of boys should set out to be ministers? What kind of man can qualify for such a big job, and how can he go about it?

Let me begin with two negatives. First, we don't want go-getters who are all out for number one. People who put a dollar mark on success had better go where dollars are to be found. In the ministry there are neither cushy posts nor any fat incomes relatively to the scale of living required. But that is true for scholars and artists and poets and honest politicians too. A man can be sure of a decent living if he hustles. That is all any decent man should want. No pastor will have to climb into heaven through a needle's eye. Does that discourage you? Fine! We don't want your type, then, anyway.

Secondly, we don't want goody-goodies. Goody-goodies have only negative character. They are unreal, and most of them are dull. It takes brains and positive character to be a good minister. A boy who believes in God and goodness, who intends to get to know God better, and who is trying to be good but having a tough time of it, that is the sort of boy who has in him the stuff of sterling manhood which the ministry needs, and which it develops in its practitioners.

V

Now for the positives. First, just as the two basic time-blocs in his weekly schedule are for study and sermon preparation and for calling, so the minister needs at every point of his work a love for ideas and a love for people, running along together. His task is primarily to be a friend and an interpreter; people and ideas are his specialties. A boy who has no impulse to make friends among all sorts and conditions of men had better not apply. Neither had a boy who prefers tinkering with machinery to wrestling with hard books. There are plenty of other useful places no less honorable for boys like that; but not the ministry. Conversely, any boy who does love people and ideas had better think about the ministry. Very likely it is his vocation; if he will listen, God is calling him through these inborn predilections.

Secondly, the right kind of boy, as I have sketched him thus far, must go to a good college and work hard for four years at general education. Then, after he has taken his B.A., he must go to a good theological seminary and work hard for three years at technical education until he takes a B.D.

What, seven years' study beyond high school? Well, to be sure, there are short-cuts. If you can find a denomination which will ordain you without much or anything by way of educational requirements, then go straight from high school to a short-course Bible Training School,

and start out as a minister after a year or two there; and see where it gets you ten years later. Ten years later, you will either be mounting pious platitudes without an idea in your head, under the impression that it would somehow be ungodly to know more than you do; or you will be sour on life because you have waked up to the fact that you don't know anything, and deep in your heart you doubt whether you believe any of the conventional notions which your job requires you to propound.

On second thought, I advise you not to make that costly experiment. You can't afford to waste the time, and perhaps your life in consequence. Better start right. Take my word for it, the ministry is as complex a profession, and should be as learned, as medicine or law or engineering. If you go into it without thorough training, you may be a good sprinter up to thirty; but you will not keep your wind and stay the course a lifetime, and reach the goal of true and lasting influence for Christ, unless you put in plenty of time to get set before you leave the starting line.

VI

I said a good college, a good theological seminary. What did I mean? Well, Elon is a good college; Hartford is a good seminary. But there are others. The good ones are where they work you hard under teachers who know their subjects and can put them over, and where they flunk you if you fail. There are some B.A. degrees, and more B.D.'s proportionately, that are not worth the parchment they are written on. The only test I can propose is that if at the end of your first semester you feel that you have been able to get by without putting any strain on your grey matter, working at less than your full capacity, you had better transfer right away to a sterner, stiffer school. You want an education that is all wool and a yard wide, not just a narrow strip of shoddy. Easy days in class make hard times later on.

I have been speaking as if I were talking to boys about their plans. Actually, I suppose, there are few if any prospective recruits for the ministry present; but I could think of no better way of talking to their parents and pastors and masters, of whom there are plenty present, than to let them listen in on advice straight from the shoulder to their boys. We are not getting enough boys for the ministry nowadays. And, frankly, not enough of the boys we get are of first rate calibre, such as this greatest of all vocations must have, if the church is to go from strength to strength instead of sinking into paltriness.

To be sure, Hartford is overcrowded; so are some other seminaries. Also it is undersupported; so are the rest. Incidentally, it costs us about nine hundred dollars a year more than a student pays, for each Hartford student; and Hartford is typical. Moreover, the funds we have for investment in your boys are not large enough to meet that drain on them; so most colleges and seminaries are running in the red. Somebody ought to do something about that.

VII

But it is boys I am thinking about now, not money; specifically, recruits for the ministry. There are not enough of them to meet the need of the churches. Give us the boys, and we will find room for them somehow, even if we have to build new seminaries. That would be better than to double the size of what we have; for in an intimate matter like religion, mass education is not satisfactory. We must have penetrative processes of close faculty-student interchange, with family rather than factory as the model and tone of a small community. In Hartford we go so far as to hold down the proportion to an average of only eight students to one full-time teacher. Our subjects can be taught; but our faith must be caught.

What are you doing about it? Are there boys in your church to whom you can put the claims and challenge of the Christian ministry as I have just now

put them to you? Have you done it yet? Have you been putting it off? Or have you simply not given it a thought? Where do you suppose the leaders are coming from if the church to which you belong doesn't do its part? And what will become of the church at large if leaders are lacking?

Go home and do it now. Send us your best. Send them to good colleges and good seminaries. Give them a vision and a chance by your encouragement to go into the greatest job on earth, to earn the richest income of interest and happiness that any vocation pays, and to serve God and his community on earth in the way they need to be served, for God's glory and the world's salvation.

A Physician Goes to Church

M. C. Twitchell, Jr., M.D.
Burlington, Vermont

A RECENT nation-wide survey of church attendance has brought to light several very interesting items. Firstly, 99% of the American people profess a belief in God, although this fact is of somewhat dubious significance unless accompanied by a definition of just what they mean by the word "God." There is a tremendous difference between a loving personal God interested in every wayward member of his flock and the more abstract conceptions of him as the Prime Mover, the Guarantor of Natural Law or the Sum Total of the Material Universe, etc. Now, the second item in this survey provides an odd contrast with the first. Approximately a third of the public never attends church, another third attends occasionally, while the remaining third form an exemplary minority as they sit in their pews every Sunday morning.

At this point let us pause and see what conclusions we can draw, and to simplify the matter let us turn our attention to that uneasy middle third of occasional churchgoers. It would seem that they are alternately attracted to and repelled by the church and if this is so it would be valuable if we could understand some of the reasons for this bitter-sweet relationship.

I

We suspect that the congregation of every church contains a considerable number of individuals whose degree of disbelief ranges from vague doubt to definite atheism. We also suspect that these sceptics are more numerous than the average minister would imagine, for most of them are understandably reluctant to air their dissenting views in his presence. Now, why do these people attend church at all if they can accept so little of the Christian theology? They are present for many reasons—some because they want intellectual stimulation, some because they look for practical advice in dealing with their problems and some because they are searching for inspiration, comfort or strength. Many are there because they fondly hope that their children will learn something of the Christian tradition in Sunday School and the kiddies go more willingly if the parents attend church. Others go for reasons less commendable but no less real—they go to see their friends, to impress their colleagues, or even from force of habit or lack of anything else to do on Sunday morning. Whatever their reasons, faith in Christian dogma is often not one of them.

This sceptical group has one thing in common—the reiteration of the basic tenets of Christian fundamentalism is not enough to hold their interest. Perhaps, then, they should be ignored as constituting a sort of radical fringe to the tapes-

try of the church body and hence not worthy of serious attention. On the other hand perhaps they should be considered, for troublesome as they may be to a minister they still form a largely untapped reservoir of great potential value to a church, both because of their numbers and their individual capabilities.

The question now arises as to what these people are looking for in a church service, and here we can narrow the problem down to what they are looking for in a sermon, for Congregationalism has so shorn itself of pomp and circumstance that the sermon has become all-important. Certainly one does not go to church primarily for the responsive readings or the prayers or the music. For better or worse Congregationalism has limited itself largely to appealing to man's intellect and emotions from the pulpit.

II

And so we come to the sermon and what these people might ask of it. They would deeply appreciate humor. It has a universal appeal and it is so rare in the pulpit. They would appreciate the English language at its best—the well-turned phrase, the well-chosen metaphor, the beautifully balanced sentence. And then, most important of all is the content of the sermon. We think most of these people probably view truth as relative, as evolving along with man as a product of his thought—not as something fixed and immutable revealed by Christ and through the Bible. Truth then would become the goal of a search on which minister and congregation embarked together rather than something to be taken for granted as already known. The minister's function in his sermon would be both difficult and demanding for he would be the guide in this search and as such would need an understanding background in science, philosophy, history and the other great religions of the world for these subjects all bear directly on man's quest for truth. These fields are all in constant flux as man's knowledge increases, so the minister would wish to read widely and think clearly lest his wisdom lag behind his knowledge and his knowledge behind that of the congregation. With such a view as this we might become less concerned with missions and more concerned with putting our own house in order—more concerned with throwing out the intellectual rubbish that has accumulated, the prejudices, the clichés, that pockmark so many sermons, the worn-out phrases that carry the dignity of years but lack the dignity of meaning. (Can any churchgoer today give a sensible definition of the Holy Ghost—a definition that carries some meaning in experience?)

III

We may then differ on metaphysics if it is to remain an open question but that need not stop us from searching together. We may even come to look at the concept of God objectively and become interested in tracing its evolution from the polytheism of primitive tribes up through the monotheism of Christianity and on to the more recent attempts to retain it as an ideal of goodness, but shorn of the anthropomorphic trappings with which it has been so long invested. We may ponder in some sermon the old question of whether God created man in his image or was it the reverse that has occurred. We might explore the field of ethics hoping to find a basis for moral behavior that will prove superior to the idea of following the will of God which has confusingly urged man at one time or another and in one place or another to violate most of the Ten Commandments. People have been killing each other in the name of God since the beginning of history to cite just one obvious example of this. We all wonder about immortality and its two handmaidens, heaven and hell. Perhaps "heaven is but the vision of fulfilled desire and hell the shadow from a soul on fire?" Nobody knows but it is a fascinating subject when approached with an eager and an open mind.

As we think over the possible range of subject matter for sermons we find most of the material controversial in nature rather than dogmatic. We see in it a challenge to think for ourselves—not just a challenge to follow someone else's thinking, and this challenge applies equally to both minister and congregation. Those wonderful concepts of soul, God and the hereafter do not have to lose their ancient force and dignity when put into a newer context of science and humanism, but they will have to undergo some change from their traditional meaning. This is a confused and confusing world and unfortunately it is not rendered less so by the acceptance of churchly fundamentalism which may be a solution for some but to many it seems like escaping the harsh winds of reality by burying our heads in the comforting sands of dogma.

IV

Now finally if a difference of opinion should exist between a minister and a congregation holding such liberal views, what can be done about it? We might say that the minister stands on the solid ground of orthodox Christianity and need not change, but the gulf still widens and the liberals still depart in search of a more stimulating intellectual and spiritual climate elsewhere. It would seem as though man's intellectual and scientific world had advanced so rapidly that much of church doctrine had been left behind —still loved for its associations but no longer respected for its truth.

In these pages I have been concerned principally with the sermon as a cause of irregular church attendance and while the criticisms made obviously do not apply to all sermons, they certainly do apply to many I have heard. As a layman I do not presume to know the whole solution, but I strongly suspect that sermons would improve greatly if the divinity student received a more intensive education in science, philosophy and comparative religion and if the minister throughout his career would pursue these same subjects more eagerly in his reading. Such study could not fail to keep him more realistically oriented towards this world and more receptive to man's changing concept of it. It seems to me that such a minister could well give many a sermon that would leave his congregation wishing they could hear him in the pulpit more often than once a week.

If I Were a Minister

Mrs. George T. Duke
Colebrook, New Hampshire

SOMETIME ago two other ministers' wives and myself were asked to speak at a ministers' association meeting on the subject, "If I Were a Minister." It is a subject I approach with deep humility. The minister of today has many problems to face. That he does face these problems with courage, with conviction, and with deep spiritual insight is something of which we are well aware; perhaps no one more so than she who walks by his side. Yet, the greater the minister, the more willing he is to admit his human frailties, and to seek divine guidance, and human counsel. It is to these that I would speak.

If I were a minister I would try to be honest with myself. A minister need not be ashamed to admit his own shortcomings. No one expects him to be perfect; neither God or man. It is so easy for a minister to spend time on the shortcomings of his parishioners or fellow ministers, and forget his own weak-

nesses. Before one can truly help others, he must first know how to help himself. If any minister is to continue to grow spiritually, he must never let the demands of the day crowd out his own personal moments with God, or neglect the source from which his own help cometh.

If I were a minister I would remember gratitude; being grateful for that which I had, and for the countless opportunities offered me to serve my fellowmen. The two most striking examples I recall of ministers who were of the ungrateful type still bring a distasteful twinge to my mind. The first of the two was a caller in our home shortly after we were married. I adjourned to another room, but was able to hear all that he had to say, as the conversation was carried on in a booming tone of voice, "No sir, Brother," he said, "It's no use trying to be a minister these days. You just can't make a decent living. Folks are always imposing on you. I could see the handwriting on the wall, so I got out of it, and went into the insurance business." The second minister was a little man trying to appear big. He drew up a bill of rights, and in loud and no uncertain terms, asserted what he would do, and what he would not do. Have you ever watched anyone decay spiritually? It's not a pretty sight. In the course of your ministry much will be asked of you, sometimes, seemingly, more than you can bear. Yet, any minister who has truly loved and served his people, will have deep gratitude in his heart always. He may have given much, but so have his people.

I

If I were a minister I would seek to develop patience. Patience is a virtue in any man; in a minister it's a requisite. When you have parish members who are hesitant about joining the church, do you become impatient with their attitude? Do you dodge certain calls on old folks, because you haven't the patience to listen to their oft repeated tales, or the listing of their woes? Do you become impatient with church officers, when their thinking doesn't follow your line of reasoning? We hear much about the patience of the scientist. In order to secure positive results, he is willing to experiment over and over again. If results are negative, he never thinks of giving up. He simply tries again with a different approach. Human nature is so unpredictable, we say. Of course it is, but why use that fact in a negative way? Why not use it as a spring board to launch into new avenues of interest and friendship, and ultimate cooperation. These experiments in human relationships take time, and effort, and patience, but they are immeasurably worthwhile.

If I were a minister I would try to carry myself with dignity at all times. Ministerial dignity, to me, is an absolute requisite. This doesn't mean that I feel a minister has to be sanctimonious. A good sense of humor; the ability to laugh at oneself; to share in a good laugh with others, takes away nothing from the dignity of the minister. I think there is considerable confusion in the mind of the laity, and the clergy itself, as to what constitutes ministerial dignity. It isn't something which you can put on and take off at will, which is what some ministers have tried to do. In fact, it isn't something which is put on from the outside at all. If it is, it's false dignity. True dignity is inborn. It grows from the inside out.

II

I think much of this confusion as to what constitutes ministerial dignity is a carry over from a generation or so ago, when it was considered to be "beneath the dignity" of a minister to do much else than expound words of wisdom from the pulpit. Whenever he went among his people, it was expected that he would carry his pulpit presence with him. To such as these, it was unthinkable that a minister might indulge in manual labor. If a need arises, why shouldn't a minister work with his hands? A professional man once told me of having seen a minister helping at a fire. He seemed to think it

quite a remarkable thing. He told me of how the minister helped pull the fire hose across the road, and then stood on the road directing traffic. When the fire was at its worst, the minister took his place at the nozzle along with the other man. His face was blackened with smoke, and his clothing torn. While the man was speaking, he kept shaking his head, as though he just couldn't visualize a minister doing anything like that. I admire a minister like that.

It seems to me that the ministerial robe of dignity isn't something to be worn in such a way that it separates the shepherd from his flock. Nor is it a garment to be worn lightly, and cast aside at the whim of the wearer. I think back to the moment of ordination, when each one who consecrated his life to the Christian ministry, remembers how, at that very moment, it seemed to him as though the Mantle of the Most High God dropped upon his shoulders, and so adorned, he went forth to serve his people. Dignity attained at such a moment should be sufficient for a lifetime.

III

If I were a minister I would try to be humble. Unfortunately, many ministers suffer from a false sense of humility, which is perhaps the most dangerous kind of all. It's insidious. It grows on you without your being conscious of it. There are certain spiritual tests which you may take in order to find out if you are suffering from this disease.

1. Which is the more natural thing for you to do; to speak for your fellow clergy, or to speak against them? A truly humble person is not critical of others.

2. If you hear Brother Blank is having a difficult time in a given situation, do you find yourself thinking of him in a disapproving way, and that if you were in that situation you could probably handle it?

3. When you are preaching, do you find yourself thinking of how you're putting it across; rather than the message itself?

All these are warnings. Heed them! As the years go by, and a minister gains experience, he sometimes forgets that God and he together make the team. You often hear him say, "I did so and so in MY church." He forgets that he must exalt God and his purpose; not himself. In his letter to the Romans, Paul says, "Do not think of yourselves more highly than you ought to think." This, it seems to me, is the secret of true humility. It isn't talking as if you were a worm, like Uriah Heep. It isn't acting as if everyone else were right, and you were wrong. True humility is an attitude of the heart and mind, which leads to cooperative service with Christ. Perhaps it would be well if the minister of today remembered more often the words of Micah, "What doth the Lord require of thee, but-to walk humbly with thy God."

It takes many things added together to make a good minister. There is no master list. I have mentioned some things which seem important to me. It is assumed that every minister, if he bears the name, carries with him always a sense of mission to win others to the Christian way of life. This is the Rock upon which all else is built. I myself am not a minister, I don't expect that I ever shall be, but if I were a minister I'm sure it would be for me, as it has been for countless others, a life choice with no regrets.

Kierkegaard and the Protestant Pulpit

The Rev. Raymond E. Gibson
Pittsfield, Mass.

A NUMBER of years ago in a book called, *The Terrible Crystal,* in a chapter entitled "Denmark's Dead Man," Mr. Channing-Pearce described the significance of Soren Kierkegaard for the modern school that we have come to designate "crisis theology." The book draws a line of existentialist thinkers from Kierkegaard to Karl Barth and emphasizes the marked influence that Kierkegaard has had on the later philosophers and theologians in this tradition. It is an interesting fact that the man who is, in many ways, crucial for understanding much of modern theology is so little read and, one would suppose, understood throughout the Protestant ministry. Kierkegaard is studied in most seminaries and by younger graduates who are active ministers but the impact of his writing is not as yet felt by a large segment of Protestant preachers.

There are a number of good reasons for this. Kierkegaard's writings are difficult to understand. The reading of a very extensive amount of his work is required before the various segments of it come into the focus necessary for understanding. The minister who reads the "Kierkegaard literature" and does so in search of anecdotes and sermon material will not find much of direct use. Here and there he will find a striking phrase and occasionally he will find a figure of the imagination or a dramatic incident which at first glance may seem to have meaning and to be of use in sermon preparation. However, most men who try to use the figures Kierkegaard has created find that taken by themselves they do not communicate in the same crucial way they do in the context of his writing. Kierkegaard's illustrations are usually such that they would not lend themselves for explanations of points in a sermon: they would make it necessary to build the structure of the sermon to explain the illustration. Suffice it to say, while the writings of Kierkegaard may be of great value to the Protestant minister, that value will have to be found on a different level from the level of sermon preparation.

I

Students of Kierkegaard find a great deal of indirect help. Often it will take the form of an understanding of the Christian faith as it relates to our time. They find their faith presented in a manner and with a profundity that challenges their preaching. Kierkegaard's significance for the preacher may be seen in three distinct realms.

Those preachers who have studied philosophy, particularly if they have a bent in the direction of Idealism, either Platonic or Hegelian, will become uncomfortable in the presence of many of the traditional assumptions of that school. In fact, they might find a certain uneasiness about the "realm of Thought" itself. Kierkegaard inhabits the "realm of faith." He, and for that matter the whole school of existential theology, has been unwilling to give a particular premium to abstract thought, under the assumption that the primary factor in religion is not the codification or manipulation of abstract categories so much as it is the "existential tension," or relationship between individual man and God. This is important in preaching. The emphasis on *right ideas* or a particular *intellectual scheme* upon which one's world view might hang becomes secondary to the

existence of a living and dynamic relationship between man and God. This is to say something that Christianity has realized from its inception. The Christ makes himself known in the event; God appears in an Act, is apprehended in the matrix of the historical. The Logos is more than a child of Greek intellectuality. He is the Logos, yes, but living. The Word becomes flesh.

Kierkegaard realized that Hegel's great mistake lay precisely in the assumption that Mind penetrates through the structure of Being to the working of the ultimate or Absolute Idea. For Kierkegaard the important reality is the existing individual participating in the crisis of history in which the redemption of God is taking place in Act rather than in Thought.

There is a second area in which Kierkegaard is important. He will make the preacher of ethics uneasy if he remains in this realm for too long. The proclamation of "The Word" is not to be confused with moralistic homilies. Philosophy can deal with ethics but for the person living in a particular time concerned about the eternal dimension of life, ethics can give no ultimate answers. Ethics may regulate behavior but it does not project a destiny. Beyond the ethical realm and transcending it is the realm of the religious or the realm of faith. The realm of faith may, at times and under given circumstances, make the commands of ethics seem mere foolishness. Kierkegaard's *Fear and Trembling* is an interpretation of the dilemma of Abraham in the sacrifice of Isaac. In this situation Kierkegaard points out that viewed from the perspective of ethics, Abraham is a murderer. But viewed from the perspective of faith, he becomes a hero of religion.

Kierkegaard was nurtured in a land where the ethical pietism of Calvinistic theology had so diluted the function of prophetic religious transcendence that at many points Kierkegaard was convinced it would be necessary to destroy the institutional church before a living religion could appear. While speaking to his age he challenges the modern child of liberal theology to a deeper realm than that of social change based upon humanitarian ideals and ethical prerogatives. He challenges him with the figure of the individual man confronting God in a profound and personal relationship which for modern man will be like "swimming over twenty thousand fathoms' depth of water," or as he has put it in another instance, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

II

The third realm in which Kierkegaard will challenge the modern preacher is in his conception of the nature of the sinfulness of man. The minister who periodically preaches on Sin and means by it the sins of drinking, smoking, gambling and loose sexual living, will find an emphasis on sin which considers the spirit before it considers the body. Kierkegaard is concerned with the sins of the spirit. Protestant preachers may be surprised to find in Kierkegaard a very high priority given to the sin of pride which, in modern times, too often has become acknowledged subtly as a virtue. The awareness of the inability of man to effect his own salvation and his utter dependence upon God is central for Kierkegaard.

The psychological profundity of this dimension of Kierkegaard's position should be noted. He is often given credit for the first real exploration of man's condition of alienation from God and his world; a condition brought about by man's sin. Kierkegaard's exploration has opened a new country to a group of literary existentialists who have spelled out the implications of man's alienation from God in the various realms of the spiritual life, including the ethical, the aesthetic, and even the metaphysical. The names of Kafka, Sartre, Camus and Joyce come to mind, to name only a few. But modern literary existentialism, while it may have caught his melancholy, has not Kierkegaard's depth of insight. While

they see man in the terrifying aspect of aloneness, the literary existentialists have not seen that it is to this situation that God addresses himself in Christ, and supremely in the cross and the resurrection.

As we read Kierkegaard, we may feel the abyss opening beneath us. But we confront something else. The grace of God is given to man, even as he confronts the abyss, and God, not man, brings the dawn beyond the dark night of the soul. Man is sinful, daemonic, and alienated. But the grace of God expressed in the "foolishness" of the cross forgives and reclaims man, and challenges him in each existential moment to a deeper realm of service in faith.

Shake Hands with the Minister

The Rev. Arthur H. Kolsti
La Grange, Illinois

MY interest in the hand shaking habits of ministers began during seminary days. It grew out of a conversation with a friend as we were comparing notes on field work assignments. In the course of his remarks, my friend commented on the way his new boss greeted the flock on Sunday mornings. "All actions are automatic," he said, "even the remarks are stereotyped." The phrases repeated over and over were, "How are you?—That's fine." Now certainly this is correct and proper, but when repeated in chorus fashion it becomes suspect. "Someday," said my friend, "when he asks how I am, I am going to say, 'Just terrible.'" "I bet his only reply will be, 'That's fine.'"

Since that conversation I have made it a point to study these small habits. The most unusual case I discovered was that of a brother who would meet me on the street, offer his hand for a brief moment, do an about face, and then proceed to talk with me as he moved backwards. As the conversation faded out of earshot I felt guilty. The disturbing thought that perhaps I ought to be that busy ran through my mind.

There have been other cases of meeting brethren that wear looks that bespeak of benediction. The most recent was meeting a pastor who shakes hands in a most unique way. The arm is extended sideways with the hand tilted at a forty-five degree angle. As greetings are exchanged the arm slowly moves in an arc-like sweep. The net result is that as you are about to exchange a few more pleasantries, the momentum gathered while being gently pulled in an arc ejects you forward out of range. Even at this moment the lever-like arm is moving into position for contact with another victim.

The conversation to this point may seem spurious, but, the point is this: the harried, nervous, busy sort of person has become a symbol of this age in which we live. How many times a week does the pastor hear the remark, "I'm just so busy these days." Much of this business concerns itself with trifles and details and stems from the inner disorder of a tired and confused spirit. The diagnosis is familiar enough to all of us.

I

Needed in these days of "business" are persons who in their own manner and attitude will be oases of calm and steadiness, persons who have not lost their sense of personal values to a world of things. The pastor should naturally fall into this role. Yet, it seems that the pastor has just become another symbol of this age, another busy person. Perhaps we have been conditioned for this. Day

after day in seminary, through lecture and book, we are told what a busy man the pastor ought to be. To quote a famous General, "That's a lot of bunk."

John's Gospel tells of a most stupendous undertaking. "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us." This was certainly an exacting enterprise. Yet how overflowing it was in simple things like personal sympathy, personal recognition, and personal attention. There was no mechanical motion nor hurried "business" in this mission. An embittered woman at Jacob's well, a hardened tax collector, little children at play, these all found One who had the time, One who was an oasis of the peace that passes understanding. He preferred a face to face ministry to the impersonal method of boards and committees.

I have not meant this to be a defense of laziness, but, a plea for down to earth interest in individuals. A street corner chat can easily become a Sacrament of Grace. A few sincere words on Sunday morning at the door may do more good than the sermon. One call that lasts an afternoon may be worth more in heaven than a hundred made for the sake of the record. A small act like shaking hands can reveal the calibre of the shepherd.

". . . the best portion of a good man's life,
His little, nameless, unremembered acts
Of kindness and of love. . . ."

Wordsworth

Christian Affirmations

The Rev. Carey Christy
Davenport, Iowa

Proof text:—"I know whom I have believed," II Timothy 1:12.

THE Christian gospel, by its very genius, is one of distinct affirmation. It teaches most clearly that all abundant living lies in the direction of the positive affirmation of life. In its very beginning, it arose against a background of negativism almost as great as that which has enveloped so many segments of our modern civilization. In Christ's day, traditional Judaism had proven itself to be lost in the maze of its total reverence for its own hallowed past, while ignoring many evils that lay heavily upon the people. Destructive militarism, as personified by the Roman legions, had swept over a larger part of the civilized world. In the resultant confusion, philosophers of the crushed races were inclined to the pessimistic view, as they witnessed the aggressiveness of Roman might and ideology as they attacked and destroyed the classical civilizations.

I

Certainly the drives for confident living were at a very low ebb when Christ came forth preaching His affirmative gospel. Also, as they do in every time of chaos, men were giving themselves over to the more brutal passions and lusts. In the midst of such darkness, the light of the Christian gospel shined forth, bringing the challenge of its own affirmations to many. It was this positive and spiritually dynamic gospel which started Christianity on its triumphant march around the world in its efforts to bring the light of hope to all men. Therefore, it would seem to be the better part of wisdom for those who look at the present era with such hopeless pessimism to make a more careful analysis of the basic affirmations of Jesus, which have indelibly stamped Christianity as a peculiarly positive and dynamic faith.

Christ affirmed life. He held that righteousness is better than wickedness, as a principle for abundant living; so Christians hold that man must be brought to affirm righteousness as a positive principle; rather than to surrender to negative evil.

Christians admit the fact of evil in the world. They see it acquire gigantic powers, at times, to reek its deadly vengeance upon the innocent as well as on the guilty. Yet, Christians do not despair of man's ability to respond to righteousness. Christians do not admit that evil should ever rule out the good for any expediency. And, though many are led to compromise with evil, it can never become an affirmative basis for a just and righteous way of life. For example, Christians contend that the wastefulness of war, of gambling, or of prostitution can never be justified, though many do succumb to them. In other words, the number of its disciples does not give evil the right to be called "good." Furthermore, the satanic idea that "anything goes" just as long as one can get away with it, is a false and negative philosophy of life which invariably leads to self-defeating ends.

Christianity believes man's better self can be appealed to, and once his conscience is awakened, he will turn toward righteousness rather than toward evil. For, although evil may persist until the end of time it cannot forever suppress the good. God in his own Divine way, has endowed that which is good with so much of his own divine rightness that it must forever remain the undergirding principle of all useful living.

II

The second great affirmation of our faith is that God does defend the right with all his divine and almighty power. We do not believe God leaves us to fight our battles alone, but that He is always standing by, "Keeping watch above His own." Men are often sadly mistaken in their judgment of right and wrong. Our feeble concepts of true values as they stand in time or in eternity, are so limited that we need the help of a superior and Infinite Mind to cast its influence on the side of the right, when we have hard decisions to make. Christians believe that God is holy, and in Him is no unrighteousness at all. In his great book, *"God And Man,"*[1] Prof. Farmer says: "Christianity affirms that, while God has bestowed upon us real community of being with Himself, in that He has made us persons and has personal relationships with us, nevertheless it is also true that He is 'wholly Other' than we are; He is 'wholly Other'; because He is God, and we are not God, we are man!" Surely it is but one phase of His divine province, in His "community of relationship with us," to stand firmly on the side of that which is right, offering us a portion of the Divine Will in support of the good, and against the evil which would draw us away. Thus, a Christian affirms that God does support and defend that which is righteous.

III

A third great affirmation of our Christian faith is that man is fundamentally of superior value to God, and is thus worth saving. This is sometimes lost sight of under the clouds of cynicism which envelop the minds of many in periods of chaos. Today, many false doctrines of the negative value of human personality are being spread abroad over the whole earth. Communism, Materialism, and Militarism, all deny the sacredness of human personality, and seek to make every man but a pawn to be enslaved or expended at the command of those in the seats of power. While man does show a great and terrible capacity to do evil; still the Christian philosophy refuses to admit even this to be sufficient ground for any type of fatalistic pessimism.

J. S. Whale, in his book on *"Christian*

(1) Farmer, Herbert H., "God and Men," pg. 123, Abingdon-Cokesbury.

Doctrine"[2] brings in a three-fold count against "the confident optimisms of modern civilization": (1) the failure of Utopian humanism to take a sufficiently tragic view of human nature, (2) as man's power to do good is increased, so is his power to do evil increased, in exactly the same ratio, (3) the imperfection of "goodness" legalistically conceived.

It is not wise that we should attempt any theological tight-rope walking between the two poles of Total Depravity and Utopian Humanism. In fact, most of life at its best is lived somewhere between the extreme poles of opposites.

Yet, if we stop with a mere indictment of every hopeful view of man as but another expression of Utopian Humanism; then, there is little left for us but to accept a fatalistic pessimism, and give up all hope of his redemption. It is true that the mystery of evil is as little understood as the mystery of the good; but Christians persistently affirm that God did care enough for man, that He chose to do a thing unique in history when He sent Christ to earth to open the way for man to come again into "a community of being" with God through Divine grace. While freely admitting man's grossest imperfections, our faith still holds to his redeemability; and that he is fundamentally worth every effort put forth for his salvation.

IV

Following this line of reasoning, it would appear that the fourth great affirmation of our faith must be that there is nothing so futile as futility in seeking solutions for any of the problems of society, or of man. Problems dismissed arbitrarily as beyond solution, are seldom given the benefit of a doubt by those who so thoughtlessly dismiss them. Cynics have scoffed at the briefness of Christ's ministry; claiming no man could even scratch the surface of the colossal evils which, to this day, remain to curse mankind. Even so, Christians have countered with the affirmation that He set in motion a body of just and righteous principles which can regenerate life if applied to any of the complex problems of our human existence.

Christians suffer along with their fellows when evils are magnified in the earth, but even in the midst of suffering, the Christian still affirms that these evils can be neutralized by the superior power of love, mercy, justice and truth. for the forces of disintegration *shall never* silence the positive and constructive affirmations of the gospel. We may have discarded the "blasphemy of optimism," as Trueblood[3] says, but, as he has tried consistently to point out, we must go forward finding ways to realize the positive affirmations of our faith; for this world of men can never be saved to any sort of new life by negative "isms" which deny life and create distrust. Man cannot live without faith, and he finds it intolerable to live forever in the shadow of impending catastrophe. He needs a positive faith to give punch and meaning to his earthly pilgrimage. The cynics and the weaklings even now are seeking underground shelters from the atomic blasts of social and political upheavals, but they will find none save in some positive affirmation of life such as we see in Christ.

In times when millions seem to be living in futility and despair, the Christian's affirmation of the gospel of Christ should ring so true to his own faith, that all the world might know he stands among those of whom it may rightly be said, "these are they who hold the world together." We shall see no greater evidence of redemption which cometh down from above until we learn to use the redemption already given in Christ Jesus.

If He, facing Calvary, could say truly: "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world," John 16:33, and, "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom," Luke

(2) Whale, J. S., "Christian Doctrine," pg. 37, Macmillian Co.

(3) Trueblood, D. Elton, "Alternative to Futility," pg. 14, Harper & Bros.

12:32; then, should we not rise to meet the world's negative futility, with a dynamic and affirmative faith? For it seems that in every time of crisis, God *does* lay upon his chosen people, the bounded obligation to affirm in confident faith, "those things which are most surely believed among us." (Luke 1:1)

The Train to Good Church

The Rev. Graham R. Hodges
Ticonderoga, N. Y.

ONCE there was a church train which could not get out of the station of Run Down. For some reason no engineer was able to make it go forward. Several had tried and failed. The big driving wheels on the locomotive would just spin and spin, shooting out sparks, while the smoke stack sent out huge clouds of steam and smoke. The train even ran out of coal several times and the passengers had to borrow Mission Coal, a special kind of coal which was supposed to be recommended for trains in trouble.

While the church train was sitting in the station of Run Down many of the younger passengers grew tired of waiting and got off, taking their children with them. They said there were other trains going to the same place with equal accommodations and with the same fare. So why wait? When they left most of the remaining passengers were grey haired. Some were just as happy, for the young people and their children had irritated them. But most of the remaining older people were sad, for they felt the train wasn't the same as it used to be. A special club car was fixed up for the younger people, but they continued to leave, as they seemed to want forward motion more than anything else.

Finally, the passengers found a new engineer who would sit in the cab. They had been without an engineer for a long time and it was good to have one. The new one, named Preacher, was young, full of cheer, well educated in engine running, and he even had a wife who would be the Fireman, and both of them would work for just one salary. He and the passengers agreed that they all wanted to go to just one place—the station of Good Church. Everybody was happy and said: "What a fine young engineer and what a fine wife he has for a Fireman!"

I

Preacher got into the engineer's seat and pulled the throttle. The wheels turned and didn't just spin, either. Slowly the train pulled out of the station of Run Down. Chug! Chug! Chug! Wheeeooo! A choir—a youth group—a church school. How happy everybody was. This was just like way back when!

Suddenly, something went wrong. The engineer noticed it first. Quickly he checked the steam. All right. He and the Fireman threw on more coal, and more. How they strained, but the train seemed to lose momentum no matter what. Neither of them could possibly know what made the train slow down, as the cause was back in the cars.

It seemed that the train was oddly equipped. For beside every seat was a lever. Each lever was connected to the brakes, so that any passenger could simply sit in the seat, jerk on the lever, and cause the train to slow down. No one lever could stop the train by itself, but if just a few were pulled at once, well, the whole train, locomotive, coal car, baggage car, and the rest—could all be

brought to a full stop. This was true even if most of the passengers wanted to keep going.

This is what had happened: When Preacher really had the train going along —chug, chug, chug! a few passengers became alarmed. One said, "We're going too fast. We have never been this fast before." Another, "This countryside looks strange. I'm not sure this is the route." Another, "The coal bill is going to be tremendous." A lady said, "I think twenty miles an hour is terribly reckless." Several said, "We need a new engineer. We've got what we wanted out of this one." One man said, "Teasing engineers is my favorite sport. Heh, heh, heh! I'll bet he squirms when I pull the lever this time." Then he gave a big pull and all the others who were unhappy gave a big pull with him. Screech, screech—and the train jerked to a stop. Most of the passengers were very angry, but couldn't do a thing, as just a few could stop the train and keep it stopped, just as they had done back in Run Down.

Back the engineer ran. When he climbed into the cars he saw the trouble instantly. But what could he do? Those few people held tight to their levers and chanted: "We want a new engineer! We want a new engineer!" The other passengers wrung their hands and moaned: "Oh dear, what shall we do? Here we are, out in the middle of the country, it's midnight, and no engineer will come. Besides, it's wrong to put the brakes on Preacher, and just when we were going so well. Still, these are our relatives and we don't want to hurt their feelings."

Preacher said they could get a new engineer if they wanted to, but the main trouble was really the brake system. If it could be changed, he said, the levers taken out, and the train stopped only when the majority of passengers wanted it stopped, then all would be well. Otherwise, he would leave and let them have the train as they wanted it.

II

Well, the passengers had a meeting. We won't tell all that was said, but when the meeting was over, it was agreed that the levers should be taken out and the train run by mutual agreement between the engineer and passengers. Some who liked to pull levers and said their grandfathers had pulled them, too, said they were getting out. Some actually did, and everybody else was glad. But the rest were bluffing and stayed on. The passengers saw that getting a new engineer was wrong. Preacher was a fine man and they had come to like and trust him and his Fireman, or Firelady.

Preacher and Fireman got back into the locomotive cab, pulled the throttle, and off they went. Back in the cars, everybody was glad now that the levers were gone. The train had to stop frequently to take on new passengers, and the old passengers hopped off and helped the new ones up the steps. Soon the cars were filled with children and young people. And strangely enough—the train didn't fall apart even at forty miles an hour. And there were more people to pay the coal bill. Everybody was happy and gay.

When we last heard, the train was only a few miles from the station of Good Church. Believe it or not, the gayest people on this train were some who used to enjoy pulling the individual brake levers the most.

Horace Bushnell
1802—1876

By Warren S. Archibald, D. D.

A Sermon Preached in the South Congregational Church, Hartford, Conn.

"Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ."
ROM. I:1

THIS text was used by Dr. Parker in 1902 in his address on Horace Bushnell. The Apostle and the Hartford prophet, were above all, servants of Jesus Christ. And we also in our day must be servants of Jesus Christ.

Strangers in Hartford when they see Bushnell Park and Bushnell Memorial ask the question: "Who was Horace Bushnell?" May everyone here be able to answer that question! Horace Bushnell was a famous Congregational minister in Hartford, one hundred years ago —Bushnell Park was his creation and design. Bushnell Memorial, given and endowed by his daughter, Mrs. Appleton R. Hillyer, has been generously supported by his grand-daughter, the late Mrs. Mary Bushnell Seaverns, and her husband, Mr. Charles F. T. Seaverns.

Horace Bushnell graduated from Yale College in 1827. He came to Hartford in 1833 to be minister of the Old North Church, the only church in which he was a minister. He resigned in 1859 on account of ill health. Tuberculosis had fallen upon him in his early forties. He was a sick man for over 25 years. Only his strong constitution and mighty will kept him alive. He died in 1876.

I speak to you this morning about Horace Bushnell, servant of God, great citizen of Hartford, from the reminiscences of Dr. Parker and Dr. Twichell, his beloved friends.

Dr. Parker was a graduate of Bowdoin College. He was minister of our church from 1860 to 1920. He came to the Old South Church in Hartford the year following Dr. Bushnell's resignation. Dr. Parker speaking in 1902 says of Horace Bushnell: "He had a vital, original, fertile, versatile mind; sane, serene, hopeful, cheerful, and honest as the light; an inventive mind." His inventive mind designed and created Bushnell Park. He designed his own house, where he might have "large views," and "see a great way off." A mind can be bad or good. A mind can be perverse, diseased, narrow, obtuse, carnal, weak, and reprobate. He had a good mind, a wonderful mind.

Even such a mind must be under control. Dr. Parker says, "He had himself in splendid self-control." He was an example of the wise words: "Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control. These three alone lead life to sovereign power."

This "vital and original" mind concerned itself primarily with religion, and with religion as a reality and experience with the mind of God. Dr. Parker quotes Mrs. Bushnell: "It all came to him, after all his thought and study, not as something reasoned out, but as by inspiration from the mind of God."

So the Christian religion, his faith as a servant of God, was vivid, bright, animated, fresh, clear, strong. It was never dull, dim, faded, dismal. Dr. Parker says: "Nothing was more characteristic of Dr. Bushnell than just this vividness." So his sermons do not fade with time. They are bright and fresh in 1952 as in

1852. "Every Man's Life, a Plan of God," is indelible.

Dr. Parker emphasizes that his religion was a Vision of God, his vision, seen with the eyes of his soul. But more than all else he saw through the outward and temporary into the inward and eternal, and reported what he saw with enthusiasm. In this he was like his Lord, whose servant he was, for that Lord with his sovereign vision, saw even in most humble men the capacity to be prophets, apostles, and martyrs. Dr. Parker says: "We who were so much with him, and greatly reverenced and loved him, did not, because we could not, take the full measure of his stature and size, and his virtues and values far exceeded our appreciation of them. Fair and bright as he seems to memory, looking backward through the mist of years, he seems even brighter and fairer, gentler and worthier, and our reverence and affection for him grow apace, as we know him less and less after the flesh, and more and more after the mind and spirit, and see him, 'walking in an air of glory.'"

Dr. Twichell, the dear friend of Dr. Parker and Dr. Bushnell, was minister of the Asylum Hill Church from 1865 to 1918, and served as a Chaplain in the Civil War. Dr. Twichell's father took him to hear Dr. Bushnell. He says: "I was but a lad. Nothing definite do I recall. I vaguely see a slightly built man in the pulpit, turning the leaves of his manuscript, and speaking with energy. But I distinctly remember father saying, as we drove in the dark: 'that was great preaching, great preaching.'"

Dr. Twichell describes the second time he saw Dr. Bushnell. "My next memory is clearer. The summer of my Junior year in college—1858—my classmate, George Dunham, of this city, a splendid fellow, and a parishioner of Dr. Bushnell, while a member of the Yale boating crew, preparing for that year's rowing contest with Harvard, was drowned at Springfield. The funeral was in Hartford, and our whole class came up to it. It was held in the Old North Church. Dr. Bushnell at that time was utterly broken down in health; but 'the brief address' was, 'a moving one—'"

Dr. Twichell recalls the third time he saw Dr. Bushnell. This reminds us of the famous text in St. John: "it was about the 10th hour"— He says: "It was not till 5 or 6 years later, during the Civil War, being at home on leave of absence from the army, and visiting Hartford, I was taken to his home by a friend, and introduced to him.—I was at that time, for a couple of days, a good deal with him; and sat once or twice at his table; went with him to his mid-week meeting, and spoke to his people of my work as army chaplain. Then it was that I took my first real sense of him, began to discern the manner of spirit he was and fell in love with him—"

"So it was, when in 1865, I came to Hartford to live, there was no circumstance of the situation that I prized more, then that it included nearness to Dr. Bushnell—"

Dr. Twichell remembers him as a great preacher of the Gospel, a servant of Jesus Christ. "A leading business man in the city told me that when he was a youth, his employer . . . used to come into his store on Monday mornings, and say to his partners and clerks: 'You ought to have been in our church yesterday! You would have heard one of the greatest sermons ever preached.'"

Again Dr. Twichell testifies to the influence of Dr. Bushnell's preaching on the men in Hartford. "Mr. Austin Dunham in his time, one of Hartford's most honored and enterprising citizens, once remarked to me, that in no other way had Dr. Bushnell done so much for Hartford as in making men. The fact is, he said, he taught men to think large thoughts, to use their minds. He put into them the notion of amounting to something, of accomplishing something, which in many cases accounted in large degree for what they did amount to and accomplish."

Dr. Twichell remembers with awe and

wonder, the pluck and courage of the man, sick in body, mighty in spirit. "It was always a marvel to see how that inner life dominated the physical in him. If you were going to climb a mountain, he would go along with you. 'Hold on,' he would call out, 'remember you have lungs, and I haven't—' But he never gave up. There was no end to his pluck."

Dr. Twichell bears mighty testimony to the Truth in Dr. Bushnell's religion. He is telling us that he and Dr. Bushnell were climbing Mt. Marcy, on their way to Bushnell Falls. They spent the night on the mountain. Dr. Twichell made their bed on the ground. "When it came time to get into our blankets, we had a few verses from the New Testament. I asked him to pray. He turned partly over on his face—he was lying down—and began in his natural voice, but with a tone as soft and melodious, as the slow murmur of the stream beneath, what seemed for all the world like speaking to some one who was next to him, but whom I did not see."

So Dr. Twichell and Dr. Parker have spoken to us this morning of their dear friend, beloved master, Dr. Bushnell, a servant of Jesus Christ—

Now, we must try to live so that of us also it can be said: servants of Jesus Christ. Remember, then, these two great thoughts. First: make the most of your life. Your life is short. "Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day." Make the most of your life. It is all you really have. It is all you can take through death to God. Let your life therefore be hid in Christ, lived in Christ, so that you can make the most of your short day. In the second place: make the most of your religion. Increase your sense of God. The object of every sermon is to make men aware of God. The object of our worship when we come to church, is to have more awareness of God. This is what we need today in this hard world. In the words of Dr. Gordon: "I, for one, cannot imagine a greater good to this panic-stricken, troubled, storm-tossed world than this: the steadying power, the clarifying power, the peace-giving power, and the hope that come from even a momentary communion with the mind of God."

The Haunted Places of Life

The Rev. Edward S. Guilbert
Clifton, Illinois

ONE would hardly think of ghosts in connection with a bright summer day and a group of children playing games—or with a children's birthday party. But this bit of whimsey is a passage in *The Foolish Gentlewoman,* a novel by Margery Sharp: "All places we have known in youth are haunted, but not all ghosts wring their hands; as many play cat's-cradle, or strum 'The Merry Peasant', or slip a first ball dress over bright hair. . . ."

Of course, we do not really believe in ghosts. Belief in ghosts is a survival from mankind's primitive past.

As the quotation from the novel has it, the ghosts of our childhood are the memories of bright, carefree, happy days —days before we had grown up to assume the responsibilities, cares, and troubles of adult life. We are all haunted, as it were, by the happy years of long ago.

Those were years, to quote a phrase from the *Book of Hebrews,* when we entertained angels unawares—the angels of bright dreams and hopes and ambitions of what we were going to do when we grew up, of the successes we would make in life. Those were the years when we lived in a magic world of make-be-

lieve, *Alice in Wonderland* sort of years. And now that we are men and women we are sometimes haunted by those bright years that have not come true as we had dreamed them.

There are no ghost stories in the Bible. The Bible does not believe in ghosts. The only part of the Bible which might be interpreted as a ghost story is the twenty-eighth chapter of the first *Book of Samuel.* You can read it for yourself.

There is only one application of this old story that might be made to our world today. As Saul called up the spirit of the great prophet Samuel to seek its advice—what if our country could call up the spirits of Washington, Jefferson and Lincoln to guide it in these troubled days!

For are we not living in a haunted world—a world of fears, suspicions, hatreds and misunderstandings? A world haunted by the question, War or Peace?

But as the passage from the novel says, "not all ghosts wring their hands"—they sometimes slip a first party dress over bright hair. So we are not always haunted by fears, by the memories of past mistakes and failures, by hatreds and suspicions, not always. There are the days and moments of remembered beauty that haunt us—the glory of a sunrise or sunset, the memory of the handclasp of a friend who proved to be true, the memory of an unexpected gift we received from someone that loved us and held us dear.

I

And are we not haunted by the love of God? Knowing ourselves, do we not ask ourselves what God sees in us that he should love us and care for us? That he should so freely offer us his divine love—a love of which we feel ourselves unworthy. Ought not this fill our lives with a haunting desire to be worthy of God's love—to rise to those spiritual and social potentialities of character that God sees in us? Does not God's love call forth, however faint, a response from our human hearts?

The love of God is a deep mystery, that it should be extended toward us who, in our better moments, are compelled to confess our unworthiness of it.

The author of the *First Letter of John* attempts to explain this mystery as he writes: "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. . . . We love him, because he first loved us." So simple and yet so profound; it should fill our days and nights with joy and hope and faith—with a haunting wonder that makes of our lives something to be lived with high nobility of thought, word, and deed—that makes of our lives a great trust not to be misused or wasted in trivial ways.

But do we not sometimes try to shut the doors of our lives against God's love? I have known people whose manner of life and ways of speaking seemed to indicate that the doors of their lives are closed and sealed against God. I have even known them in the church. In *Kingdom Lost,* a novel by Patricia Wentworth is this passage: "Valentine gave up trying to say what couldn't be said. You couldn't say things to Aunt Helena; she wouldn't let you. It was like trying to open a door when you could feel that the person inside was pushing against you with all his might." I have known people like Aunt Helena. I have preached *at* them to seeming no avail.

God never forces his entrance into any human heart. The door must be opened by us. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him," said Jesus.

I remember the line of a poem—*"the shadow of the hawk"*—the shadow that haunts all small and helpless creatures—the fear of the hawk that would swoop down to destroy them. That shadow is over our world today.

But there is another shadow—the shadow of God's love—the shadow that brings cooling and healing—from the fierce heat and hurt of life. The psalmist wrote: "Hide me under the shadow of thy wings. In the shadow of thy

wings will I make my refuge. He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."

II

Finally. When we think of places being haunted, it does not always mean something fearful or evil; it may mean memories of beauty, of moments of happiness and peace, of loved ones long since gone.

And so the author of the *Gospel of John,* writing to a generation that had never seen Jesus, wrote: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

"In the beginning there was fear, and fear was in the heart of man; and fear controlled man . . . all the days of man were gray with fear, because his universe seemed charged with danger." So wrote Lewis Browne in his book *This Believing World.*

How different the outlook of the Gospel! "God is love . . . love has no dread in it; no, love in its fulness drives all dread away." This is the Word of the Gospel.

And this we may believe and trust until the eternal morning breaks and earth's vain shadows flee.

Report of the Chairman of the Associates in Reading

The Rev. Richard P. Carter, Reporting

TO see life whole and to see it true, this is the need the Christian gospel must minister to today. People are finding life breaking into fragments, uncertain as to which ones will hold them. And what minister has not listened to the bewildered asking in the midst of our times' many raucous voices, "What can we believe"?

I once observed a great artist painting the portrait of one whom he had never seen in life. I had expected him to surround himself with many photographs of his subject, composing from them something that might be a composite of the person they pictured. Not so. For more than a week he refrained from viewing these. Instead he spent hours listening to friends describe the person they had known, relating personal, intimate experiences that revealed his characteristics. Only after he had thus formed in his own mind a vivid picture of a personality and character, did he turn to photographs. With these to furnish the features he then put on canvas a likeness of the great personality he had come to know. As the artist observed, "a true portrait must reveal the whole man." The opportunity and need for the Christian to see life with this sort of wholeness and truth has perhaps never been greater.

With this thought in mind the Associates in Reading have selected the following list of books. We hope you will find them of help, in making your ministry increasingly effective.

By special arrangement with the Pilgrim Press a discount of 20% will be given to any group using any of these books. All copies, however, must be sent to one address to save individual wrapping, and under a single billing. Simply indicate in your order that the books are for a group reading under the Associates and the special discount will be granted.

Let the Director of the Department of the Ministry or the Chairman of the Associates know what we can do further to be of assistance. Godspeed the hope of the gospel to our people.

Lenten and Spring 1953 Recommended Reading List of the Associates in Reading and Discussion of the Department of the Ministry

PRIMARY LIST

"Man and State," by Bishop Eivind Berggrav. Muhlenburg, $4.00

One wonders if "Man and State" would have been written had it not been for the rise of the Quisling government, which thrust Bishop Berggrav of Norway into solitary confinement. The source materials he needed were smuggled in to him and the finished manuscript smuggled out.

The book truly represents a Christian's own soul-searching of the problem. The title might better have been "God, Man, and State," for he clearly sets forth the conflict which exists between the moral law of God and that state which considers itself above morality. Like it or not, we have adopted as basic for the state the principles of Machiavelli which make the state amoral. As Berggrav epitomizes Machiavelli, "it is in the interest of the state that its citizens should be bound by the very moral code from which the state claims exemption."

Bishop Berggrav proceeds to give the Christian answer. He covers the problems of international law, intra-state power, the democratic state, and many others. Herein are subjects for unending discussion, drawn from one man's bitter experience. This book is probably the most penetrating one on this subject.

"An Autobiography of Prayer," by Albert E. Day. Harper, $2.50

Prayer is conscious growth toward God as the individual emerges from self-centeredness into the beauty, power, peace, and joy of divine fellowship. This book gives an excellent and authentic account of one whom has climbed the heights. It is well-written, amply illustrated, and well-documented from the saints and the mystics. It points to possibilities beyond the reach of many pedestrian souls, but will encourage, beckon, call them to this pilgrimage. It is the best in its field in many a year. Read it, mark it, think about it and discuss it with others. You will find yourself returning to it again and again.

"What Present-Day Theologians Are Thinking," by Daniel Day Williams. Harper, $2.00

This is a most comprehensive study of contemporary theological thinking in a small volume. Every page is packed with food for study and discussion. It covers Christian theology for the past 30 years. Five main Christian traditions are considered: Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Anglican, Calvinist, and liberal Protestant, especially as they deal with ethics. The other major areas of thought are the Bible, Christ, and the church.

The book is not merely historical. You will find the author's own theology woven into the pattern of discussion. It is therefore always "alive." An excellent study for the Lenten season, you will find it a spring-board for your own thinking. For as the Williams says, "we never exhaust the meaning of Jesus Christ."

"The Great Enterprise," by Harry Overstreet. W. W. Norton & Co., $3.50

This book of two equally fine parts, "Equipment for Maturing," and "The Self in the World," issues a clarion call, not unlike an evangel. For it urges a

re-examination of the self in its dynamic relation to inter-personal relationships. Overstreet serves his reader well in giving clear, psychologically sound reasons for reality disorientation, and with the same clarity outlines the way out of this corrupting influence. The concluding five chapters, dealing with the present East-West conflict, show most succinctly the brutality of the doctrinal mind and the tragedy within the evil of Communism. This analysis of the 20th century crisis would alone recommend the book. The author's explanation and exhortation will admirably serve the minister who seeks deeper sympathy with his people. It will strengthen his confidence in the naturalness of the transforming power of the gospel.

"Poetry, Religion, and the Spiritual Life," by George F. Thomas. The Elsevier Press.

This is a small book, but it is mighty in quality. Dr. Thomas, head of the Department of Religion in Princeton University, is a rugged thinker, and a sensitive, discriminating writer. He has selected a vital theme for today. He skillfully describes and evaluates the prevailing western conceptions of the spiritual life, and argues cogently that both poetry and religion are essential to the fulness of the spiritual life.

These lectures are more than an antidote to the scientism of our day. They will pour new blood into the constricted veins of troubled believers frustrated by their own unbalanced thinking.

SUPPLEMENTARY LIST

"P. T. Forsyth, the Man and His Work," by W. L. Bradley, Independent Press, $3.50

One of the most notable influences in the field of theology and preaching today is Principal Peter T. Forsyth. Dr. Bradley has written a first-class introduction to the thinking of this systematic mind. One third of the book is devoted to the life, background and early writings. The final two thirds offers a systematic presentation of Forsyth's theology.

"Natural Science and the Spiritual Life," by John Baillie. Scribners, $1.75

A brief book on a great problem, it will furnish a sound basis for discussion of natural science and the spiritual life. It furnishes a conclusion which does justice to logical reasoning. The size of the book, the way in which the subject matter is admirably dealt with, make it suitable for discussion.

"Criticism and Faith," by John Knox. Abingdon Cokesbury, $1.75

This volume deals with the constructive aspects of historical criticism. It makes plain how the minister should use the findings of Biblical scholarship in his teaching and preaching ministry. It is a positive, penetrating, and stimulating approach to a subject that is often conceived of in negative terms.

"Meeting House Hill," by Ola Elizabeth Winslow. Macmillan, $4.00

A penetrating yet sympathic study of the relation of the church to the community in Colonial days. One sees behind the verbiage of old sermons the concrete application to the times, a type of preaching that made the Congregational

ministers of the day the chief proponents of the American Revolution. It increases our respect for our spiritual forebears.

"The Superstitions of the Irreligious," by George Hedley. Macmillan, $1.75

With keen insight the author shows us the prevalence of superstitution in the thinking of the modern American, who, being unwilling to examine the facts of a case, denies himself the healing power of religious faith. Some of the superstitions are known to the minister as the source of excuses for lack of participation in religious life. Here those sources are revealed and new ones defined. It is treated with realistic insight and deep sensitivity.

"Crisis in the Life of Jesus; The Cleansing of the Temple and Its Significance," by Ernest F. Scott. Scribners, $2.50

The title clearly reveals the nature of the discussion. In this unique study of an experience generally considered of lesser importance, Dr. Scott describes it as of great significance. Jesus was acting deliberately, purposefully, rather than in an outburst of emotion. It was a "Messianic act."

"Pastoral Psychology." Published at Great Neck, Long Island, N. Y.

If a minister wishes up-to-date scholarly, pertinent, and Christian help in the psychology of pastoral care we suggest a subscription to this magazine. The price is $3 per year. A great aid in your counselling.

"Religion in the Development of American Culture," by William W. Sweet. Scribners, $3.50

The outstanding historian on the religious life of America here offers his second volume on this subject, this one covering the period 1765–1840. Prominent in it are frontier life, separation of church and state, and growth of denominations.

Concerning Literature and Life

The Editor

LITERATURE is a spacious word which baffles the dictionary, and critic. For it may be all that has been written about any subject—or it may be, through some excellence of theme or style, a part of the treasures of the creative human mind. There are tests; there must be nobility of theme and some quality of style which makes of words a luminous garniture. John Morley held that "Literature must have a moral quality," which means, one may suppose, that it is not in any fashion ignoble, but has a power to elevate, enrich, and purify the mind; though it may do all this as much or more by suggestion than by exhortation; as though there were mental and spiritual regions, which, although we do not often reach them, are nevertheless, our birthright and having been attained, vindicate themselves. By such tests literature is, in some form or other, an interpretation of life.

Time itself is the final test of literature. What is excellent has the right to endure. It is, of course, subject to accident, and it may well be that through war and mischance, literature has been so impoverished and, that at the best, we possess only in part the best the masters have written; but enough has endured for us to b eable to say in the long last the lives of men and of nations endure only in literature. All else passes like a shadow when the Sun is setting.

If there is any high tribunal to choose or to exclude, that is the office of the critic. He deals always with some finished product and never infallibly. What he condemns or dismisses may by its rightful power outlast him and ridicule his verdicts. What he praises may be so ephemeral as to be forgotten by succeeding generations but, in general, the faculty of just literary criticism is one of the high exercises of the mind. Criticism has, therefore, created a literature of its own and those who are mellow and wise in it put us all in their debt, though if one knew how to say it, life itself is the final critical test. For all literature grows out of life and life itself carries with and within it the final adjudications.

The spaciousness of literature is rooted in the spaciousness of life; it is its imaginations, and it is its creative vision; it is its quest and fulfillment, the laughter and the tears of it, its wisdoms and not a little of its follies; it is our love of beauty, it is our passion for truth, it is life's masteries of change and chance. It is some persuasion of belonging itself to the enduring; it is sensitiveness to a light which rises beyond the hills of time. Literature may therefore reveal itself in an epic or a single singing line, in tragedies and triumphs, in noble narrative or a way of saying the imperishable. Those who have themselves the high gift of writing in such ways as these put all of us in their debt because they lift our minds to the best and the most enduring.

* * *

All this because there is on an old desk as this is being written, Dr. Lynn Harold Hough's latest book, *The Great Humanists.** "Humanists" is a word Dr. Hough has made particularly his own, but it has a long history. Its more technical uses date from the revival of learning in Western Europe, though the "humanities" have traditionally designated one region of academic education; as specifically as may be the courses in language or literature, and still more specifically in the study of the classics, Greek or Latin.

**The Great Humanists,* Dr. Lynn Harold Hough, Abingdon-Cokesbury Press.

"Humanism," as *Hasting's Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* defines it, was an emancipation of the human mind in the West. That mind has become aridly contained by time, dessicated certain theologies and was strictly patterned. The times were ripe for a new release of creative power in Religion, in Literature, and in Art. The invention of printing, the fall of Constantinople, which turned Greek scholars with precious manuscripts to Western Europe, all combined to that rebirth. All this is a common place of history and the far-reaching consequences of it are still in action.

"Humanism" for Dr. Hough is not quite the equivalent of Matthew Arnold's *Culture*. It is the coordination of literature, literary criticism, religion and life; the free and happy play of the mind under the constraints of faith and truth. He has made this field his own—for years and has every gift for its cultivation. Few contemporaneous ministers have so long and so many faceted an itemized place in *Who's Who* as Dr. Hough. He is a tireless and precise reader. The books he reads are pencil-marked page by page and his vivid and vital gifts of speech and composition lend an arresting appeal to his public addresses and all that he writes.

The "Great Humanists," of whom he writes in this his latest book, are Aristotle, Cicero, Erasmus, Paul Elmer More, and Irving Babbitt—a most catholic and in some ways a rather surprising list. Between them they cover more than 2300 years. Geographically they begin in Athens, where in a grove dedicated to Apollo and the muses, and much frequented by Socrates, Aristotle founded the "Walk-About" academy where he and his disciples considered the profundities of varied fields of thought as they paced. It continues through Greece and Rome and the literary capitals of Europe to the retreats of New England and the classrooms of Harvard where Irving Babbitt challenged the educational ideas of President Eliot and the learned and laborious sterility of contemporary research scholarship. All this is a vast frame into which are set men so profoundly contrasted and demands the organization of an unbelievably great material.

Dr. Hough has managed all this more than adequately. He has brought to the writing of the book his nature and mellow wisdom, the usufruct of tireless reading and an engaging gift of comment and observation sometimes brilliantly epigrammatic. The elect five are placed historically in time and space. The sequences of their experiences are followed.—what they wrote and how and why exhibited and interpreted, and their contributions evaluated. The reader may become the critic as he chooses: that Aristotle, for example, dominates much more than the humanistic field; that the versatility of Erasmus has tempted a versatile pen; that the author, like all other writers has cherished adjectives —but these are minor criticisms.

* * *

Very likely Erasmus is the only one of the five who was a humanist as the word is specifically used. Aristotle cannot be contained in any single designation. Cicero qualifies through his erudition, his love of literature, the distinction of his style, his essays on old age and friendship, and the enduring charm of his letters. Paul Elmer More qualifies for his erudite interpretations of the great literature of life and experience in the *Shelburne Essays*. Irving Babbitt qualifies by the searching vigor of his critical faculty. All these men, their lives and writings, pass through the alembic of Dr. Hough's mind and the result is, this reviewer thinks, the best of Dr. Hough's books. This reviewer possesses besides the advantage for which he never can be grateful enough—of having through his years in Detroit and since shared the play of Dr. Hough's mind and the blessings of his friendship.

* * *

If there is any conclusion it is this—Preaching needs always to be mellowed and enriched by a citizenship in litera-

ture. There is amongst us a growing feeling that our extremely technical specialized higher education is failing in just this field. The gifts to the endowments of colleges and universities are being increasingly ear-marked for technical and scientific research. The Classics are fading out of the picture and something is gone which the simpler courses of study in the colleges and universities more than two generations ago contributed. Distinguished writing is by no means a lost art, but it has suffered an eclipse, and distinguished speech in public and especially political forums, becomes a memory. Those of us who heard the addresses in the nominating conventions recognized that they were hoarse and hostile with crude partisanship and passion. And something is gone of still more inestimable worth; the persuasion of the high and possible values of human life. Not, of course, in the humanitarian sense; we here in America have probably grown in humaneness—though it cannot be reconciled with war—but in mental poise and balance, in the resources of the mind and in the gifts of the spirit we begin to fail. A civilization thus handicapped begins also to fail in its fundamental support. It boasts and boasts, but its boasting becomes a veil through which its weaknesses begin to show.

* * *

Preaching itself may become literature. It may have everything which John Morley notes as the Hall-mark of literature. It affected profoundly in one period, the spoken and written uses of the English language. Newman did his best work in his sermons. Bossuet had no reason to shun comparisons with the masters of French prose. A preacher may, if he pleases, make sermons out of books. In that now mostly evanished period when preachers were doing their most ingenious best to keep their Sunday evening services going, series on books seemed a very present help in time of need, and sometimes that worked. But, in the main, one of the great services of the Church is to save us from the spiritual and ethical bankruptcy toward which an excess of technical training is tending, and restore amongst us a sense of the enduring values.

Literature alone will not do it, though preachers do take their texts from an old and sovereign literature. "The future of Democracy," Dr. Hough says on his chapter of Babbitt, "demands a type of education which will bring the wisdom of the ages to bear upon problems of the age," and this among so many other things is the mandate of the Church. Literature serves a preacher best when he has therein so disciplined and enriched himself, that the light and wisdom of the ages gleam through his spoken word and bear witness to the comradeship from which he has come to his pulpit. This is not beyond any preacher's powers. His sermons will not be echos or quotations but will reveal sources still more deeply interfused. The realization of this may be one of the compulsions out of which Dr. Hough has written so wisely, so graciously, and so long.

* * *

Lent, in all probability, will have begun before this issue of the QUARTERLY reaches its readers. Our observances of the season are now habits which need not be urged but which may always be disciplined. The literatures proper to its observances are so amply supplied from other sources that they do not need to be duplicated here, but those who lead their congregations may wisely approach them from some communion with those who have spoken not only for their own time but for all time. Washington Gladden, it is said, used to spend the last hour before taking his sermon, already written in its limp leather case, into the pulpit in such reading. It gave hallowed ascent to his prayers and the music of the poet modulated the accents of his noble voice. The preacher who walks hand in hand with literature walks hand in hand with life. He may well thank God that he belongs to such a fellowship.

The Interpreter's Bible, Vol. I

(The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, New York and Nashville, Tenn.)

The Rev. Frederick L. Fagley

New York, N. Y.

THE publication of The Interpreter's Bible, to be complete in twelve large volumes, is one of the great events of the religious life of our times. For many years a panel of the world's greatest Biblical scholars has been cooperating in bringing the best thought of the modern mind to bear upon the infinite number of questions that arise in the study of the Bible.

Now the results of these years of patient scholarship are being made available to religious workers around the world. Both religious and secular papers and magazines have welcomed this magnificent addition to Biblical literature.

This Volume I, the third to be published, places before the reader in the first four hundred pages excellent material upon the Bible, under two headings:

1. General articles on the Bible, as the development of the Canon, history of the English Bible, and history of Bible interpretation.

2. General articles on the Old Testament, as the Literature of the Bible, the Prophetic literature of the Old Testament, the Wisdom literature, and the meaning and significance of the Old Testament for today.

This last section includes a masterly History of Israel by Prof. Theodore H. Robinson, and a History of the Religion of Israel by Prof. James Muilenburg. Each of these sections would make a standard size book, and if so published each book would be an absolute *must* for Bible students.

The remaining 600 pages of this Volume are given to Genesis and Exodus, and what a wealth of material is here!

The Genesis section carries the Exegesis by Dean Cuthbert A. Simpson of the General Theological Seminary, and the Exposition by that prince of preachers, Walter Russell Bowie.

The Exegesis of Exodus has been written by Prof. J. Coert Rylaarsdam of the Federated faculty of the University of Chicago, and the Exposition by Dr. J. Edgar Park, President Emeritus of Wheaton College and one of America's best known preachers.

The stories of these two books are deeply ingrained in the thought of all mankind. Among Jews and Christians the names of the actors and the incidents of the drama are part and parcel of racial inheritance. This book is of the greatest help to the modern preacher or church school teacher who seeks to deal with the questions that are in everyone's mind, whether spoken or unspoken. To ignore or to treat lightly what has been for long centuries a vital part of the mental and emotional inheritance of mankind is to throw away what is of infinite value. Civilization and morality are based on the foundation ideas of these early writers. It was the Old Testament teachings Jesus came to fulfill. not to destroy. This is what this book will help religious workers to understand.

A just knowledge of these teachings, their religious and moral content, gives depth and solidity to preaching and teaching; qualities sadly needed in this rapidly changing world which has slight understanding of the deeper and more lasting quality of man's experience with God.

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The Congregational Christian Ministry:

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